

# CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1           1.       A method for selectively removing data from one or more images in a  
2 computer based system, comprising:  
3           acquiring at least one diagnostic image;  
4           identifying patient information that is to be excluded from the at least one  
5 diagnostic image;  
6           modifying the at least one diagnostic image responsive to the step of identifying,  
7 wherein identified patient information is excluded from the at least one diagnostic image;  
8 and  
9           exporting the at least one modified diagnostic image over a data network.
- 1           2.       The method of claim 1, wherein acquiring comprises performing a  
2 diagnostic examination in association with an image acquisition device.
- 1           3.       The method of claim 1, wherein acquiring comprises retrieving a data file  
2 from a data storage device.
- 1           4.       The method of claim 1, wherein identifying comprises selecting at least  
2 one patient identifier to be removed from the at least one diagnostic image.
- 1           5.       The method of claim 1, wherein modifying comprises obscuring an area of  
2 the at least one diagnostic image.
- 1           6.       The method of claim 5, wherein obscuring comprises applying a mask.
- 1           7.       The method of claim 5, wherein modifying comprises applying at least one  
2 mask to the at least one patient identifier in the at least one diagnostic image.

1 8. The method of claim 6, further comprising:  
2 applying a mask to the at least one patient identifier in a plurality of frames  
3 comprising an image loop.

1 9. The method of claim 6, wherein a plurality of masks are superimposed  
2 over a respective instance of the at least one patient identifier in a multiple image display  
3 format.

1 10. A computer based diagnostic image enhancement system, comprising:  
2 means for retrieving a digital representation of at least one diagnostic image;  
3 means for identifying at least one patient identifier reflective of the subject of an  
4 underlying diagnostic study that is not intended for association with the at least one  
5 diagnostic image; and  
6 means for selectively obscuring the at least one patient identifier responsive to the  
7 identifying means.

1 11. The system of claim 10, further comprising:  
2 means for communicating the at least one diagnostic image to at least one device  
3 on a network.

1 12. The system of claim 10, wherein the retrieving means comprises a  
2 computer based diagnostic image acquisition system.

1 13. The system of claim 10, wherein the retrieving means comprises a  
2 computing device in association with a network.

1 14. The system of claim 10, wherein the identifying means comprises an  
2 image enhancer.

1 15. The system of claim 10, wherein the obscuring means comprises a mask.

1           16.    The system of claim 15, wherein at least one mask is applied to the at least  
2   one patient identifier in the diagnostic image.

1           17.    The system of claim 15, wherein at least one mask is applied to the at least  
2   one patient identifier in a plurality of frames comprising an image loop.

1           18.    The system of claim 15, wherein a plurality of masks are superimposed  
2   over a respective instance of the at least one patient identifier in a multiple image display  
3   format.

1           19.    An interactive diagnostic image enhancer, comprising:  
2           an image manager configured to receive a digital representation of a diagnostic  
3   image and at least one patient identifier;  
4           a user interface coupled to the image manager, operable to receive a plurality of  
5   commands from an operator via at least one input device, configured to identify at least  
6   one patient identification parameter that is not desired for association with the diagnostic  
7   image, wherein the user interface generates at least one command responsive to the  
8   identified patient parameter; and  
9           an image editor coupled to the image manager and the user interface, configured  
10   to receive the at least one command, wherein the image editor obscures the at least one  
11   patient parameter.

1           20.    The image enhancer of claim 19, wherein the image editor applies a mask.

1           21.    The image enhancer of claim 19, wherein the image editor applies at least  
2   one mask to the at least one patient identifier in a plurality of frames comprising an image  
3   loop.

1           22.    The image enhancer of claim 19, wherein the image editor superimposes a  
2    plurality of masks over a respective instance of the at least one patient identifier in a  
3    multiple image display format.

1           23.    A computer readable medium having a computer program, comprising:  
2           a first logic for identifying at least one patient identifier related to a patient that is  
3    the subject of a medical diagnostic exam;  
4           a second logic for obtaining an input reflective of an operator's desire whether to  
5    associate the at least one patient identifier with at least one image acquired during the  
6    medical diagnostic exam; and  
7           a third logic for generating the at least one image with the at least one patient  
8    identifier obscured in response to the second logic.

1           24.    The medium of claim 23, wherein the third logic ~~logic~~ applies a mask.